

CITY OF MIDDLETOWN

Parks & Recreation Department
100 Riverview Center
Suite 140
Middletown, Connecticut 06457

Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes of April 4, 2013 **Held at the Recreation Department Office at 100 Riverview Center**

Present: Commissioners Gerry Winzer, Tony Jaskot, Todd Berch, Sheila Jones, and Rick Romano. Acting Director Debbie Stanley, Acting Superintendent Gerard Cyr, Budget Analyst Christine Bourne and John Milardo, member of Palmer Field Concession Subcommittee.

Absent: Commissioner Philip Pessina and Student Representative Dhruvi Patel.

Call: Chairman Winzer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the main room of the Recreation office, 100 Riverview Center, Suite 140, Middletown.

Public Hearing: There were no members of the public and the public hearing portion was closed.

Minutes: Chairman Winzer requested a motion to approve the minutes from January 3, 2013. There were no minutes from February and March as the meetings were cancelled due to lack of quorum. Commissioner Berch made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Romano.

Vote: The Parks & Recreation Commission minutes of January 3, 2013 were unanimously approved. Commissioner Jaskot abstained.

Correspondence: Acting Director Stanley reported that there was no new correspondence this month. Commissioner Berch responded that the Easter Candy Hunt was an excellent affair and he was impressed with the organization and number of participants. Ray Jacobs would have been proud.

Department Reports: Acting Director Stanley reported that in the Recreation Division approximately 300 children participated in the Detroit Hunter-Ray Jacobs Easter Candy Hunt indoors at Woodrow Wilson Middle School. Everyone has pictures taken with the Easter Bunny. Attendance was the highest it has ever been, since being held indoors.

Old Business: **Renovation of Palmer Field Concession Stand.** Chairman Winzer spoke about the need for the Concession Stand at Palmer Field, however with the budget being tight, we might want to consider renovating the existing building. Commissioner Berch suggested we table the issue for one month to see what the budget looks like after it is adopted. John Milardo spoke about the money that was saved from advertising that was supposed to be used for the Concession Stand. Councilman Serra said at a Common Council

meeting that the advertising money should be used for renovations to Palmer Field and that he wanted the Concession Stand done properly and the Common Council would consider bonding for the funds. John Milardo recommended that at this time we should gut the inside of the existing concession stand, bring the wiring and plumbing up to code, put in a working cooler for a cost of approximately \$25,000. Commissioner Jones suggested we ask for LoCIP money to pay for this. Chairman Winzer said that a Councilperson approached him and suggested we wait on this for another year. John Milardo stated that we need to start working on the existing structure now to have it operational for the spring. He suggested we bring the funding to Finance and Government Committee and let them decide if they want to move forward with this project. Commissioner Berch said we should look into adding it to a bonding package and do the project that way.

Veteran's Pool Boiler – Acting Superintendent Cyr reported that the Boiler project was complete except for the installation of a summer/winter switch that will be done soon. There was a discussion about the age of the pool and what it might need in the future.

New Business: Veteran's Memorial Trees – Acting Director Stanley reported that Planning and Zoning and Public Works are taking the lead on planning and excavating and gave Chairman Winzer a flyer with the information on it. John Milardo stated that there is a company that will be doing the road work. Commissioner Berch reported that the Parks & Recreation Department will be included in this project.

Civic Organization Signs at Veteran's Memorial Green – Civic organizations have been asking if their signs will be added to the new sign that is on the Veteran's Memorial Green.

At this point a Middletown Press reporter joined the meeting.

Commissioner Berch made a motion to move the new Welcome sign from its current location to a spot on the green on the corner of Vine Street with clean screen topsoil. Commissioner Jones indicated that the Parking Department hired a company to install these signs and they should come and put the new sign in and put the proper topsoil down. The installer was supposed to find out where this Commission wanted the sign placed, but did not, so they will have to move it. Acting Superintendent Cyr said that the Parking Department was having their installer come and correct the soil issues. Commissioner Romano said that residents have to maintain around the signs that were placed around the city and were complaining about the rocks and debris around them. The Parkind Director indicated that the installer will come back and correct that problem. When then return, they can relocate the sign athte Veteran's Memorial Green. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Jaskot. All in favor to move the sign location.

Commissioner Berch made a motion to send a letter to the existing civic organizations that have plaques on the old sign. Chairman Winzer said he was afraid we were opening a pandora's box and that we have discussed this several times and the green looks good without any signs on it. In addition he said that we should contact the Veteran's Council

before we make any decision about the signs. Commissioner Jones stated that these civic organizations could be grandfathered in because they had plaques on the old sign. A discussion about sign, availability and who could put their placard on the new sign was had, whether only the organizations who had something on the old sign, what happens when a new organization asks for a spot and what would they all look like. John Milardo read a City Ordinance regarding signs on public property need to go before the Veteran's Council for approval. Commissioner Berch rescinded his motion. Commissioner Romano suggested we contact the Veteran's to see how they feel about adding to the Welcome sign. We asked their input when this topic came up before and they have a strong interest in the Veteran's Memorial Green. Commissioner Berch withdrew his motion and Commissioner Jaskot withdrew his second.

Commissioner Berch stated that the signs are a common New England "look" and the civic organizations are important. Commissioner Berch made a motion to table this topic and send a letter to the Veteran's to get their input on civic organizations putting their information on the Welcome sign. Commissioner Jaskot seconded. All in favor.

Miscellaneous: Chairman Winzer commented on CIAC having problems with our scoreboard at Palmer Field and that we need to control the scoreboard for outside users. Chairman Winzer also asked about the skating rink. Acting Superintendent said that the weather wasn't ideal. The snow was difficult and it would have been difficult to keep the snow off of the rink. In addition, the location used last year was very difficult to level the rink and a new location needs to be found to use it next year.

Budget Analyst Christine Bourne gave the Commissioners information on the balance of the accounts in the Parks Division. Due to the decrease in funding from last year, more than \$92,000 in the major operating accounts and the fact that snow storms cost more than \$28,000 in excess overtime, she was requesting the Commission allow Acting Director Stanley to ask for an appropriation to cover the excess costs. Commissioner Jones reminded the Commission that the Common Council needs to see that we need the money and that we need to use existing funds first. Everyone agreed that this was a difficult year with the storms. John Milardo remembered when Tina Gomes asked to take \$15,000 from the Parks budget because we were not going to have a specific tournament that year and assured the Parks Department that we would get those funds back, but we have not to this date and now have this tournament coming up. Commissioner Romano made a motion to allow Acting Director Stanley to review the accounts and ask for an appropriation for funds needed after all other accounts were looked at. Acting Director Stanley can decide how much she needs to request. Motion seconded by Commissioner Jones. All in favor, unanimous.

Motion Motion to Adjourn by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Berch, all in favor, passes unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Christine Bourne
cc: Mayor Daniel Drew